



YOUR DREAMS



INCREDIBLE: (From left) Monument Valley is phenomenal; the snaking Colorado River and dining out in Utah in the style of a cowboy



it was a short hop to Salt Lake City with Delta.

The view flying into Salt Lake, which sits at 4,300ft (1,310m) surrounded by the lake and two different mountain ranges, the Wasatch and Oquirrh, is spectacular.

Our first full day was spent visiting Antelope Island State Park, a wild and beautiful area famous for its buffalo and antelope.

From here the real journey began, heading 573km by road down to Moab in the south-east corner of the state and the first of the national parks, Arches, which is famous for just that, huge spectacular sandstone arches.

FUNKY

We hiked the five-kilometre return trip to one of the most famous, Delicate Arch, which was magnificent under a clear blue sky and with snow-capped mountains in the distance.

Moab itself was rocking as it was a Saturday and we dined in a packed microbrewery serving a range of delicious homemade beers.

Utah is the world capital of the Mormon religion and people mistakenly believe there is no alcohol in the state.

In some particularly religious places it might be hard to find, but not in the funky town of Moab.

Other towns enforced the state law that alcohol could only be served with food but this could be one plate of tortilla chips and salsa between several people.

The next national park on our itinerary was Canyonlands, where a short walk to the Mesa View Arch offered stunning views – from a cliff edge at 6,000ft – of the carved out canyons below.

It was like a smaller Grand Canyon and we stopped off at numerous overlooks.

The Dead Horse Point State Park nearby is where they filmed the final scenes of *Thelma and Louise*.

In the hit movie, the women drive off a cliff into what they thought was the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

In reality it was this park in Utah with a 2,000ft drop

to the Colorado River. Monument Valley is one of the highlights of any trip to Utah and we woke to find it covered in a blanket of snow, always a possibility at 5,500ft.

But by lunch in the hot desert sun it had completely melted.

The famous landscape, which is on the Navajo

Indian Reservation, was the star of numerous John Ford and John Wayne westerns and is not to be missed.

We followed this up with trips to the three remaining national parks, Capitol Reef, Bryce Canyon and Zion.

The last two were simply spectacular and hiking in them was among the high-

lights of the whole trip. Accommodation is plentiful throughout Utah with motels everywhere.

One of the most impressive was the luxury Cable Mountain Lodge, in Springdale, a great base for visiting Zion National Park.

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